

Emergency Department Geriatric Accreditation

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WASHINGTON, DC – The American College of Emergency Physicians has accredited the Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center Emergency Department as a Level 3 Geriatric Emergency Department.

The Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation program recognizes emergency departments that meet or exceed the level-of-care standards established for aging adult patients in the United States.

“A large percentage of the Veteran population that we serve are 65 or older,” said Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center Director Michael S. Heimall. “This accreditation reflects our commitment to meeting the unique health care needs of these Veterans and demonstrates the level of education and training that our emergency department employees receive, as well as the standard of care they strive to implement and maintain every day.”

According to the 2021 Survey of Veteran Enrollees Health and Use of Health Care report, approximately 9 million Veterans are enrolled in the VA Health Care system and close to half of that population is over 65 years of age. Understanding and responding to the needs of the older Veteran population is vital for an organization that serves the health care needs of more than 200,000 Veterans throughout the Washington, D.C. area, and parts of Maryland and Virginia.

To receive a Level 3 Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation, a facility must demonstrate geriatric-specific



initiatives designed to elevate the level of emergency care they provide to patients 65 and older. These initiatives included designating a Care Champion, providing advanced education for all Emergency Department staff about older adult care, screening for high-risk conditions specific to older adults, and implementing processes and protocols specific to older adult patients. Accessibility and transition of care between the emergency department and other settings like inpatient or community-based care, rehabilitation, long-term care and the home environment is also evaluated.

This accreditation exemplifies Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center’s commitment to providing accessible, age-related care to Veterans who are 65 and older.

“Our medical center is dedicated to meeting the needs of our older Veteran population, and Geriatric accreditation with the American College of Emergency Physicians affirms our ongoing commitment to excellence in geriatric emergency care,” said Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center Emergency Geriatric Care Champion, Kevin Jeng, MD.

In 2022, The Washington DC VA Medical Center Emergency Department provided care to more than 23,301 Veterans. Accreditation as a Level 3 Geriatric Emergency Department means that Veterans who are 65 or older, and their families, have access to highly trained health care professionals, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in the event of a medical emergency.